



Introduction

Session 0 – 10th September 2017

Bible Readings

Exodus 3: 1-10

Matthew 22:37-40

Sermon Notes

*(For the full sermon please go online to listen
www.stmarysely.org)*

What does a spiritually mature person look like? Why does it seem so hard, and go so slowly? Will I ever really be any different? I am disappointed that I still love God so little and sin so much.

Yet I am called by God to live as my uniquely created self. I can increasingly live as Jesus would in my unique place; to perceive what Jesus would perceive if he looked through my eyes; to think what he would think; to feel what he would feel and therefore to do what he would do.

The story of the human race is one of inextinguishable hope. Jesus teaches that "The Kingdom of God is near." He redeems us and we can be something incomparably better than we find ourselves to be now.

Like Moses and the burning bush - we can 'turn aside' and encounter God. We can be transformed by God until as Paul says in Galatians: "...

Christ is formed in you." We are pregnant with possibilities of spiritual growth and moral beauty.

But just trying harder can accomplish only so much. We need to train not merely try – just as if we were preparing for a marathon. Spiritual disciplines are a means of growing toward the life that God graciously offers. They are the "means of grace." They help us live in the fruit of the Spirit. They include celebration, reading the bible, solitude, servanthood and confession. We will engage with these spiritual disciplines in this series – and as a result our lives will grow closer to the lives we have always wanted.

The Spirit plays a big part in Spiritual Disciplines. "The wind blows where it chooses," Jesus said, " you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

God's responsibility is to provide the burning bush. Our responsibility is to turn aside and respond to the fresh wind of the Spirit in our lives.

Next week we'll engage with the first spiritual discipline – that of Celebration.

Key Quotes

"And now Lord, with your help I shall become myself." Søren Kierkegaard

"Each of us can be like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in the slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday by the sea." C. S. Lewis